

**WHCOA Topic Area: Health and Long Term Living**  
**Issue: Health Care**

**Overview of Current Issue Status:** Recent evidence-based research overwhelmingly proves that health promotion and disease prevention contribute significantly to an individual's quality of life and are a cost-effective means of reducing acute or chronic care costs.

The Administration on Aging, in cooperation with the US Department of Health and Human Services, is already piloting evidence-based disease prevention programs through Area Agencies on Aging and their community partners; and Title III-D of the Older Americans Act provides funding for disease prevention and health promotion services that are increasingly important and merit strengthening.

**Challenges:** Increases in the prevalence of chronic conditions and co-morbidity are leading to a growing number of older persons with functional limitations, and medical advances continue to increase longevity as well.

**Resolution:**

Authorize \$50 million of funding in Title III-D Health Promotion of the Older Americans Act, with \$10 million of the appropriation set aside to pilot community-based efforts through the Area Agencies on Aging and local aging and healthcare providers to promote disease prevention services.

Promote and integrate physical activity throughout the Aging Network so that all older adults and Aging Network providers are aware of the benefits of even moderate physical activity.

Update Medicare to place greater emphasis on promoting chronic disease management, increasing health promotion and disease prevention measures, and protecting beneficiaries from prohibitive out-of-pocket expenses.

Advocate that public health funding be available for senior wellness programs as well as Medicare preventive health coverage, to promote healthy aging and reduce future disease-related costs.

Enhance quality of life through improved services such as pain management and end of life care, including hospice and palliative care for older adults and persons with disabilities in both community and institutional settings.

Educate the public about and establish a national registry for advanced directives to include medical and durable powers of attorney.